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BOOK REVIEWS



IN CHARGE OF

M. E. CAMERON

PREVENTION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES. By Alvah H. Doty, M.D.,
Health Officer of the Port of New York. Price \$2.50. D. Appleton
and Company, New York and London.

Dr. Doty presents us with some of the results of his own experience gathered while investigating the problems of prevention of transmissible diseases. Gradually the highly extravagant and wasteful methods which have entailed enormous losses both in the destruction of uninfected matter and in long and useless quarantine are being replaced by more efficient and more scientific means for the protection of public health. Among other things we learn that some of the most popular theories relating to the transmission of infection are false and misleading. The belief long accepted that infectious diseases are transmitted through the medium of "fomites," or clothing, furniture, etc., is now regarded as lacking in scientific evidence to uphold it. In some cases, as in yellow fever, this fact has been established, and disinfection is no longer considered necessary. The mosquito, known as "*Stegomyia Fasciata*," has been proved to be the only transmittor of this disease.

In some others of the infectious diseases the means of transmission has not yet been positively declared, but there seems to be a strong probability that we are to forsake time-honored beliefs here too. Desquamation, which has so long been regarded as a potent factor in transmitting measles and scarlet-fever, is now regarded as of little importance, if indeed of any at all, and the period of infection is limited to the early inflammatory stages and to the later only when discharges are present. We no longer sleep with tight-shut windows to exclude the poisonous, malaria-laden air—we keep windows wide open and by screens exclude not the innocent fresh air, but the guilty "*Anopheles*," the mosquito which transmits the malaria germ. The flea, active and aggravating, has been found to carry the germs of various diseases, notably the germ of the Plague, which it circulates among the rats which they infest. Infected water and food are responsible for the spread of disease in many instances and finally, and greatest danger

of all, the "mild, ambulant, irregular, and unrecognized cases," which can only be identified by bacteriological research. The subject of disinfection and the use of disinfectants is exhaustively treated, and here again we find that ancient and fallacious methods are obstinately adhered to, though proven to be unscientific and unreliable.

It is reassuring to find on looking back over the book that we are being led back to simpler ways—personal cleanliness, early recognition and isolation of cases of infection, disinfection of all discharges. These seem to be the indispensables for individual cases. For infected communities, like the breeding places of mosquitos, there seems only to be necessary that sound "business" sense which is supposed to be in-born in all Americans, as the necessary outlay in draining, etc., is returned with generous profit in increase of land value, besides immunity from disease.

COMPEND OF THE PRACTICE OF MEDICINE, GIVING SYNONYMS, DEFINITIONS, CAUSES, SYMPTOMS, PATHOLOGY, PROGNOSIS, DIAGNOSIS, TREATMENT, ETC., OF EACH DISEASE, INCLUDING A SECTION ON MENTAL DISEASES AND ONE OF DISEASES OF THE SKIN. By Daniel E. Hughes, M.D., Late Chief Resident Physician Philadelphia Hospital, formerly Demonstrator of Clinical Medicine, Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia. Tenth edition. Thoroughly enlarged and revised by J. E. Scott, M.A., B.C.L., M.D., Attending Physician DeNilt Dispensary, New York; Author of "State Board Examination Series," etc. Price \$2.50. P. Blakiston's Son and Co., 1012 Walnut St., Philadelphia.

This tenth edition of Hughes' Compend has been thoroughly revised, many changes and additions are to be noted, and the subject matter has been rearranged in order to adapt it to modern classification. Several entirely new sections and numerous tables of differential diagnosis have been added, the whole resulting in an increase of about one hundred pages.

The inclusion of "Diseases of the Skin," a subject generally omitted from works on practice, has gone far toward making the popularity of the book. The same may be said of the shorter article on mental diseases.

Dr. J. E. Scott, the editor, has had a wide literary and medical experience. He is known by his contributions to the *New York Medical Record*, on State Board Examinations, a subject with which he has become acquainted by reason of having made it a special study in connection with his teaching work and the preparation of the "State Board Examination Series."